

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 4, 2015

**Senate Resolution**

**No. 14**

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**Introduced by Senator Hall**

February 26, 2015

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Senate Resolution No. 14—Relative to the 50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday *and the Selma Voting Rights Movement*.

1 WHEREAS, March 7, 2015, will mark 50 years since the brave  
2 Foot Soldiers of the *Selma* Voting Rights Movement first attempted  
3 to march from Selma to Montgomery on Bloody Sunday in protest  
4 against the denial of their right to vote and were brutally assaulted  
5 by Alabama state troopers; and

6 WHEREAS, Beginning in 1964, members of the Student  
7 Nonviolent Coordinating Committee attempted to register  
8 ~~African-Americans~~ *African Americans* to vote throughout the State  
9 of Alabama; and

10 WHEREAS, These efforts were designed to ensure that every  
11 American citizen would be able to exercise their constitutional  
12 right to vote and have their voices heard; and

13 WHEREAS, By December of 1964, many of these efforts  
14 remained unsuccessful. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., working with  
15 leaders from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and  
16 the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, began to organize  
17 protests throughout Alabama; and

18 WHEREAS, On March 7, 1965, over 500 voting rights marchers,  
19 known as Foot Soldiers, gathered on the Edmund Pettus Bridge  
20 in Selma, Alabama, in peaceful protest of the denial of their most  
21 sacred and constitutionally protected right—the right to vote; and

22 WHEREAS, Led by John Lewis of the Student Nonviolent  
23 Coordinating Committee and Rev. Hosea Williams of the Southern

1 Christian Leadership Conference, these Foot Soldiers began the  
2 march towards the Alabama State Capitol in Montgomery,  
3 Alabama; and

4 WHEREAS, As the Foot Soldiers crossed the Edmund Pettus  
5 Bridge, they were confronted by a wall of Alabama state troopers  
6 who brutally attacked and beat them; and

7 WHEREAS, Americans across the country witnessed this tragic  
8 turn of events as news stations broadcast the brutality on a day  
9 that would be later known as Bloody Sunday; and

10 WHEREAS, Two days later, on Tuesday, March 9, 1965, nearly  
11 2,500 Foot Soldiers led by Dr. Martin Luther ~~King~~ *King, Jr.*, risked  
12 their lives once more and attempted a second peaceful march  
13 starting at the Edmund Pettus Bridge. This second attempted march  
14 was later known as Turnaround Tuesday; and

15 WHEREAS, Fearing for the safety of these Foot Soldiers who  
16 received no protection from federal or state authorities during this  
17 second march, Dr. King led the marchers to the base of the Edmund  
18 Pettus Bridge and stopped. Dr. King kneeled and offered a prayer  
19 of solidarity and walked back to the church; and

20 WHEREAS, Lyndon B. Johnson, inspired by the bravery and  
21 determination of these Foot Soldiers and the atrocities they  
22 endured, announced his plan for a voting rights bill aimed at  
23 securing the precious right to vote for all citizens during an address  
24 to Congress on March 15, 1965; and

25 WHEREAS, On March 17, 1965, one week after Turnaround  
26 Tuesday, U.S. District Judge Frank M. Johnson ruled that the Foot  
27 Soldiers had a First Amendment right to petition the government  
28 through peaceful protest and ordered federal agents to provide full  
29 protection to the Foot Soldiers during the Selma to Montgomery  
30 Voting Rights March; and

31 WHEREAS, Judge Johnson's decision overturned Alabama  
32 Governor George Wallace's prohibition on the protest due to public  
33 safety concerns; and

34 WHEREAS, On March 21, 1965, under the court order, the U.S.  
35 Army, the federalized Alabama National Guard, and countless  
36 federal agents and marshals escorted nearly 8,000 Foot Soldiers  
37 from the start of their heroic journey in Selma, Alabama, to their  
38 safe arrival on the steps of the Alabama State Capitol Building on  
39 March 25, 1965; and

1 WHEREAS, The extraordinary bravery and sacrifice these Foot  
2 Soldiers displayed in pursuit of a peaceful march from Selma to  
3 Montgomery brought national attention to the struggle for equal  
4 voting rights, and served as the catalyst for Congress to pass the  
5 Voting Rights Act of 1965, which President Johnson signed into  
6 law on August 6, 1965; now, therefore, be it

7 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California*, That to  
8 commemorate the 50th anniversary of the *Selma* Voting Rights  
9 Movement and the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it is  
10 befitting for the California State Senate to commemorate March  
11 7, 2015, in honor of the Foot Soldiers who participated in Bloody  
12 Sunday, Turnaround Tuesday, or the final Selma to Montgomery  
13 Voting Rights March during March of 1965, which served as a  
14 catalyst for the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and be it further

15 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate provide copies of  
16 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.